

LONG-TERM AIR TRANSPORTATION STUDY (LATS)

Washington State Aviation Planning Council

PHASE III COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

Updated October 2007

Public Communication or Public Involvement

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) is committed to providing and implementing an intensive outreach effort throughout the Washington State Long-Term Air Transportation Study (LATS).

The communication plan has been drafted in accordance with the WSDOT Planning Studies Guidelines "Public and Stakeholder Involvement" and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Advisory Circular (AC) No.150/5070-7 "The Airport System Planning and FAA's Community Involvement Manual," FAA-EE-90-03, which provides guidance on system planning public involvement and stakeholder consultation. The FAA Advisory Circular states specifically that:

Appropriate coordination of study drafts with the aviation public, community organizations, airport sponsors and users, and other interested parties is critical to the successful adoption and implementation of the final planning report. It is important that all affected or potentially affected parties perceive that the process is open, that the opportunity for participation exists, and that the study is designed to consider input from all of them.

The following plan embraces that philosophy to assure that the resultant system plan supports the public's best interest.

Background

In 2005, the governor signed into law Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill (ESSB) 5121, which authorized a long-term air transportation planning study for general aviation and commercial airports statewide. The legislation is also known as the Washington State Long-Term Air Transportation Study (LATS).

The purpose of LATS is to understand what capacity currently exists in aviation facilities and what will be needed to meet future demand for air transportation. The law is comprised of the three distinct components and also contains a high-speed passenger rail assessment element.

Three Phase Approach to LATS

Phase I: What do we have?

Performed a statewide airport facilities and capacity assessment, including an analysis of current utilization.

*Completed
September 2006*

Phase II: What do we need?

Developed 25-year market forecasts of each airport in Washington State, including forecast of aircraft operations, passengers, and air cargo. In addition, the role of high-speed passenger rail was assessed for its ability to relieve future constraints in aviation system capacity

*Completed
July 2007*

Phase III: How will we get there?

The Washington State Aviation Planning Council will consider the LATS Phases I and II findings as well as public input. This data and information will be used to shape future aviation policy and recommend how best to meet the state's long-term commercial and general aviation airport needs consistent with ESSB 5121.

*To be completed
July 2009*

LATS is being developed in three phases. Each phase answers one of the three basic questions fundamental to the development of a systemwide approach to managing Washington's aviation resources.

Phase III: Washington State Aviation Planning Council

In August of 2007, the governor appointed a ten-member aviation planning council to provide recommendations for future airport strategy and investments statewide. Funding for this project is provided by the WSDOT multimodal fund, WSDOT Aviation funds, and grant funds from the FAA.

The Council will work towards a common set of objectives to ensure a consistent and comprehensive approach to developing aviation system recommendations in accordance with state law (ESSB 5121) and Federal Aviation Regulations (FAR) Advisory Circular (AC) 150/5070-7 "The Airport System Planning Process."

The Council shall make its recommendations and submit its report to the legislature, governor, Transportation Commission, and regional transportation planning organizations by July 1, 2009. In accordance with ESSB 5121, the Council is required to:

- Make recommendations, based on the findings of the assessment and analysis completed under Phase I (RCW 47.68.390) and Phase II (RCW 47.68.400), regarding how best to meet the statewide commercial and general aviation capacity needs;
- Determine which regions of the state are in need of improvement regarding the matching of existing, or projected, airport facilities, and the long-range capacity needs at airports within the region expected to reach capacity before the year

2030;

- Make recommendations regarding the placement of future commercial and general aviation airport facilities designed to meet the need for improved aviation planning in the region; and
- Include public input in making final recommendations.

The Council's recommended policies and strategies for meeting future statewide aviation capacity needs will be based on the assessment and analysis completed during Phases I and II of LATS. In order for the Council to fulfill this mandate, they will have to be well informed as to both the nature of the specific issues and the implications of alternative strategies that might be pursued in order to address these issues.

The final Washington State Long-Term Air Transportation Plan will be based on action by the governor and legislature. The overall goal of any state airport system planning process is to ensure the statewide system of airports are safely, efficiently, and adequately serving immediate and long-term air transportation needs.

Council Membership

The Washington State Aviation Planning Council consists of appointees from varying geographical areas and with diverse backgrounds. In accordance with ESSB 5121, members of the Council are to consist of the following:

- Member of the Transportation Commission (serves as Council Chair)
- Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) Aviation Director
- Director of the Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development
- Two members of the general public (one from western Washington and one from eastern Washington)
- FAA technical expert
- Commercial airport operator
- Member of the Growth Management Hearings Board
- Washington Airport Management Association representative
- Airline representative

The Council shall consist of ten Council members appointed by the governor for a two-year term beginning July 27, 2007. Council members will serve without compensation and may be re-appointed by the governor. Council members will elect a Vice-Chair at the initial meeting of the Council. If a Council member must resign for any reason, the governor shall appoint a replacement.

Situation Analysis

Washington's aviation system is a public-private partnership comprised of 141 public use airports in 2005. Airports are an essential component of Washington State's overall transportation system, providing critical links to people, goods, and services. They are a lifeline to and from isolated rural communities, especially for medical and emergency

services, and enhance the quality of life for residents in their work and leisure. Additionally, airports allow for easy access by out-of-state visitors, supporting Washington's tourism business.

Airports play a vital role in the state's economy by facilitating jobs and commerce. According to an economic impact report from 2001, Washington's airport system annually generates 7,600 jobs, \$140 million in wages, and \$490 million in total sales output. In spite of its importance to the state economy, inadequate planning, an antiquated funding base, a fluctuating economy, and local land use conflict threaten the long-term health of Washington's aviation system.

In 2004, WSDOT Aviation was requested by its Aviation Advisory Committee to address three questions:

- Is Washington positioned to respond to a rapidly changing aviation environment?
- Is Washington using its limited resources effectively and efficiently to meet the state's long-term interests in aviation? What should the key priorities be?
- What strategic changes need to be made to satisfy the state's aviation policy, i.e., preservation, safety, capacity, and environmental protection?

With the input of key stakeholders, including intensive work by study groups on system planning, education and outreach, and safety, WSDOT Aviation identified key issues and goals needed to satisfy Washington State's interest in a healthy aviation system. The study groups were comprised of local elected and planning officials, airport representatives, pilot organizations, universities, and members of the state legislature.

WSDOT's 1998 Aviation Policy Framework

It is in the state's interest that:

- Aviation facilities and services be preserved that provide access for all regions of the state to the nation's air transportation system, provide for emergency management, and support local economies.
- Transportation by air be safe.
- There be sufficient airport capacity to respond to growth in demand to ensure access across the state, the nation, and the world.
- Negative environmental impacts of airports on people and the natural environment be mitigated.

The Aviation Advisory Committee identified guiding principles:

- Maximizing value and impact of public investment in the aviation system statewide.
- Increasing consistency and collaboration between the FAA, State of Washington, and local aviation policies, rules, and regulations by class of airport, recognizing that different types of airports have different regulatory and policy needs.
- Assuring adequate capacity to accommodate future aviation system needs, especially through airport preservation and enhancement.
- Anticipating and strategically respond to emerging aviation system trends and issues.

- Striving to maintain serviceability and fairness in current public investments in the aviation system, taking into account different classes of airports.

The Aviation Advisory Committee also identified the need for additional data, necessary to better define the system and its strategic priorities, including:

- Gaps in availability of aviation facilities for emergency medical, fire fighting, disaster relief, national defense, and air taxi needs.
- Systemwide performance, role, and interrelationship of airports.
- Future capacity needs.
- Projected cargo needs.
- Gaps in airport capacity that may inhibit economic development of rural areas, or that prevent full participation of rural communities in political processes at the state level.
- Reliever airports that are necessary to meet general aviation (GA) needs near large commercial airports, which if unmet would increase congestion at the commercial airports.
- Capacity of reliever airports to continue to meet the demands of GA aircraft.

It is in response to these recommendations and the subsequent legislative direction set forth in ESSB 5121 that LATS is being conducted.

Public Outreach / Public Involvement Objectives

Increase public awareness about the study.

This project is a three phase approach to determine “what we have, what we need, and how we get there” in terms of air transportation capacity in Washington State. It is important to be proactive about communicating this message.

- Increase public awareness about the project.
- Prevent surprises: actively engage the public.
- Minimize misperceptions about what the study is and what it is not.
- Promote use of the Web as primary source of information.
- Document stakeholder/public involvement.
- Minimize misrepresentations in media coverage.



- Engage the public in decision-making and gather concerns, questions, and ideas.

Equip the Council with tools and resources to accomplish its mission.

Provide Council members with well-organized and accessible briefing materials in a timely manner.

- Develop meeting agendas that support the Council's work program and decision process.
- Provide detailed summaries of Council meetings.
- Coordinate public outreach to support key Council decisions.
- Assure that the Council deliberations are accessible to the public via the WSDOT Aviation Web site.
- Develop a report that summarizes the recommendations of the Aviation Planning Council.
- Provide the Council and the Chair with timely policy and technical information necessary for the Council to fulfill its mandated responsibilities.
- Help build public awareness of the LATS process, and facilitate public involvement around the issues being addressed by the Aviation Planning Council.
- Conduct additional technical studies that may be required for the Council to fulfill its mandated responsibilities.

Key Audiences

Audience	Priority Concerns	Outreach Recommendations
Aviation Planning Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provide adequate background information about state aviation system and policies ○ Provide adequate background and technical information regarding LATS Phases I and II ○ Provide administrative support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ongoing coordination ○ Regularly scheduled Council meetings ○ Prepare briefing items in advance ○ Help develop charter, work plan, and communication plan ○ Provide technical expertise and resources ○ Clear messaging about legislative directives and expectations
Legislature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Delivery of technically sound system plan to be used for the basis of making long-term airport investment decisions ○ Local constituent concerns ○ Intermodal integration and efficiency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Initial interviews to gain perspective of expectations ○ Ongoing coordination with legislative staff ○ Regular briefings ○ Clear messaging about study purpose and outcomes
Airports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Data collection/airport inventory and overall fact finding data reported accurately ○ Opportunity to contribute to a comprehensive plan for future airport development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Start early and disseminate study goals, objectives, and tasks early
Urban Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Impacts of capacity recommendations ○ Impacts on airport planning and investment ○ Land use conflicts ○ Noise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Clear messaging about study purpose and outcomes as well as what the study does not include ○ Multiple opportunities for involvement ○ Easily accessible information, presented in simple formats – leverage Web site and existing aviation forums associations/meetings
Rural Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Relationship to local land uses ○ Economic development ○ Funding ○ Emergency access ○ Community impacts 	
General Aviation Pilots	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Airport maintenance ○ Funding of airport maintenance ○ Funding equity ○ Availability of airports ○ Stability of Search and Rescue functions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Outreach to identify deficiencies in aviation airports ○ Clarity about how designation hierarchy works ○ Accessible information, presented in simple formats

Airlines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Impact on long-term facility and services planning ○ Taxes ○ Costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Involvement in any recommendations about aviation funding ○ Clear information about decision process
Regional Transportation Planning Organizations/ Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPOs/MTPOs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Consistency with regional/metropolitan transportation ○ Economic development ○ Access to emergency services ○ Impact on transportation facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Clear messaging about study purpose and outcomes, including presenting information relevant to rural areas ○ Multiple opportunities for involvement ○ Easily accessible information, presented in simple formats ○ Clear information about decision process
Business Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Economic development ○ Impacts on costs of doing business ○ Impacts on distribution systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Clear messaging about study purpose and outcomes ○ Multiple opportunities for involvement ○ Easily accessible information, presented in simple formats
Association of Washington Cities/Counties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Economic development ○ Similar to other concerns listed above ○ Impact on land use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Clear messaging about study purpose and outcomes, including presenting information relevant to rural areas ○ Multiple opportunities for involvement ○ Easily accessible information, presented in simple formats ○ Clear information about decision process
Washington Chapter of the American Planning Association (WA-APA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Land use planning ○ Economic and social issues ○ Transportation system integration ○ Land use ○ Capital facility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Clear messaging about study purpose and outcomes, including presenting information relevant to rural areas ○ Multiple opportunities for involvement ○ Easily accessible information, presented in simple formats ○ Clear information about decision process
Rail/Freight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ High-speed passenger rail connectivity with major urban areas ○ Alternate modes of transportation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Multiple opportunities for involvement

Strategies

- Keep local media and key audiences informed.
- Lead with the Web: Create a useful, interactive Web site and update news and milestones regularly.
- Promote project benefits using listserv, press releases, Web, ads, etc.
- Implement targeted communication efforts through strategic outreach tools.



Key Messages

Critical

Washington's aviation system faces a growing crisis, due to growth pressures, uncertainty about future funding, and changes in the aviation industry. The system connects Washington's communities, no matter how remote, and drives Washington's economic health.

Deliberative

To effectively meet Washington's long-term air transportation needs, decision makers will use systematic and objective information to identify future aviation system needs, along with different ways to meet those needs.

Fair

The Council will consider the aviation needs of very diverse communities, who rely on aviation in very different ways, and will assure that future decisions address social and environmental concerns along with access and capacity needs.

Team Members and Affiliations

WSDOT Aviation Team

John Shambaugh, Project Manager
Nisha Marvel, Communications and Public Outreach
Kerri Woehler, Policy Support and Technical Analyst

Consultant Team

Dave Hollander, Vice President, SH&E
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Helen Lin, Senior Analyst, SH&E
Rita Brogan, CEO, PRR
Steve Smith, Associate, PRR
John Yarnish, Principal Airport Planner, URS
David Williams, Project Manager, WHP
Sara Funk, Senior Professional, WHP

Public Communications Tools and Tasks

Media Releases

WSDOT will issue media releases at key milestones in the progress of Phase III to announce dates of public outreach meetings and key Council news and findings. All news releases will reinforce the key messages outlined in this communication plan.

Public Information Materials

Print materials will be made available to support the Aviation Planning Council and the public. WSDOT will use its Web site for distribution of the materials presented to the Council and any additional public outreach documents.

Web Site

The WSDOT Aviation Web site will feature a special section dedicated to LATS that will include media releases, links to relevant publications, links to Aviation Planning Council summaries, information on Phase III progress, and opportunities for public involvement. Throughout the study process, WSDOT Aviation will post finalized working papers, presentation materials, and other related reports. There will also be an interactive area for periodic public comment and the ability to sign up for notification of meetings, reports, presentations, etc.

Along with updating the LATS Web site, WSDOT is finalizing the release of an updated system plan database with improved airport facility and capacity information and forecasts based on LATS findings.

E-Newsletter

E-Newsletters will be issued to WSDOT Aviation's extensive database of aviation stakeholders to announce opportunities for public input, and to inform the public about Council events, milestones, and findings during Phase III. WSDOT anticipates distributing at least four newsletters, with at least one accompanying the release of the Phase III system plan/final report by July 1, 2009.

Aviation Planning Council Meetings

All meetings of the Aviation Planning Council will be open to the public. Up to ten minutes will be allocated at the beginning of each meeting for public comment. The times and dates of all meetings will be posted on the WSDOT Aviation Web site, along with meeting summaries and resource documents.

Outreach Meetings

As in Phases I and II, WSDOT will host public outreach meeting in Phase III to provide information on key milestone and solicit feedback. WSDOT anticipates two public meetings – one on the east side and one on the west – during the midpoint of the study. Two final meetings – on the east and west sides – will also be held at the end of the process to solicit input on the draft Council recommendations prior to their submission to the governor.



Online Survey

To obtain feedback on Phase III efforts, WSDOT will conduct an online survey using Knowledge Networks, which has a scientifically selected sample of Washington State households (including those without computers or the Internet) to which it has provided online access. This sample totals more than 1,000 Washington State residents. Its proprietary methodology combines probability sampling (RDD) and the Internet to incorporate the views and opinions of a representative sample of Washington residents. The 15-minute survey will assess public opinion on the issues discussed during Phase III by the Council. Because it is in a visual format, the questionnaire can include some static graphics, such as maps or charts.

Electronic Town Halls

Two, 60-minute Electronic Town Hall meetings will be held online, via a moderated session with 150 participants each, who would be recruited from Knowledge Network's panel sample. They will be provided a stipend for their participation. The meetings will be timed to support the deliberations of the Aviation Planning Council. Subject to further discussion with the Council, the first meeting could focus on the problem definition phase of the planning process, the second meeting could focus on policy tradeoffs, and the third could consider the system investment alternatives. One advantage of the online format is improved sample representation and the capability of including visual and graphic displays along with complex policy alternatives.

Organizational Briefings

WSDOT Aviation will be available to present information on study issues or Council findings when requested by local jurisdictions, airport sponsors, and aviation stakeholder groups.

Coordination with Regional Transportation/Metropolitan Planning Organizations

The participation of RTPOs and MPOs will continue to be actively sought during Phase III. In addition to including these organizations in the ongoing program outreach, the project team will seek to brief RTPOs at their quarterly coordination meetings in February, May, August, and November.

Aviation Technical Advisory Committee (ATAC)

The ATAC is staffed with professionals possessing technical knowledge and expertise on multi-modal transportation issues, aviation system planning, airport operations, current and future industry trends, and market and capacity needs. They have provided important review and guidance during Phases I and II and will be available to the Council on follow-up issues or for further review of technical information.

Aviation Advisory Committee

WSDOT Aviation's standing Aviation Advisory Committee will provide valuable insight in the progress and development of the LATS Aviation Planning Council process. Presentations on LATS will be provided to this group at its quarterly meetings.